

Clearwater Takes Cue From Muddy

Got My Mojo Working, But It Just Won't Work on You

Clearwater project developers met the public on Wednesday night, hoping to trumpet the virtues of its proposed 339-unit, 480-room development on Old Mammoth Rd. (a six-acre site which now encompasses the Rodeway Inn, Igor's and Ocean Harvest).

The public, however, seemed to have little attraction for its suitor. "Too tall, too dense," they said, sizing up the Clearwater as if it were Cosmo Kramer.

As was alluded to in Mac's front page story, current zoning standards seem to be butting up against proposed General Plan changes.

One of those proposed changes is to eliminate height and density bonuses for underground parking.

The thinking is that land is so valuable that no sane developer would waste the space to build surface parking, ergo, why reward them for doing something they're virtually compelled to do anyway?

Unfortunately for the developer Rick Rosenberg, a sane and rational developer probably got into the game assuming he'd get these bonuses for underground parking.

The pro formas must be shot to hell.

The difficulty for the Clearwater is that the site straddles two different land uses. You've got a commercial district (Old Mammoth Rd.) on one side and residential districts (Laurel Mtn. Rd. and Sierra Nevada Rd.) on two sides.

So putting the retail space on Old Mammoth has the effect of pushing the residential component (and building height) closer to neighbors who aren't interested in staring at big-ass buildings.

Dan Dawson, one of many who spoke against the development as currently proposed, said, "My problem is that there are too many units." And if you cut the density, he added, you don't need the height. Voila.

Dawson agreed that the current proposal provides many "objectives we [the Town] want to achieve," including on-site affordable housing, public venues and commercial retail space. However, he is willing to sacrifice some of these objectives to achieve the overarching objectives of reducing height and density.

Trails Pay

Randy Martin, a real estate developer, gave three presentations this week on the added property value that trails can provide to new and existing development.

Martin's visit to Mammoth was sponsored by the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce and MLTPA (Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access).

Martin, who has developed a couple of large retirement community projects in the Central

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Valley (including Sequoia Ranch, an 805-unit development in Springville) said trails are the cheapest amenity to provide in terms of hard dollars and spaced used.

And in the case of Sequoia Ranch, he said the investment paid off tenfold.

Martin said his development team paid \$419 per unit to create a trail system and realized an estimated benefit of \$4,500 per unit.

A couple of other factoids: 80% of consumers want trails and natural trails cost \$20,000 per mile to build and virtually nothing to maintain. 30% want golf courses and they cost \$1 million a hole.

He also quoted a survey which indicated a sharp increase in interest in trails and open space within the past five years.

Finally, he pointed to recent real estate marketing in Park City where realtors use just as much ad space photographing and emphasizing trails versus the properties themselves.

MLTPA Founder John Wentworth initially focused his trails campaign on the simple message of *pay attention*. Now he's added a few words to his message. *Pay attention ... Because trails pay.*

Quick takes: ICARE dinner raised \$30,000. Rotary Poker tourney raised \$5,300. Quart Keyes raised 500" of hair. And hey, the Town needs volunteers to be area coordinators for Town Clean-Up, so see page 16 and call who you need to call.

